

Draft  
Meeting Notes  
LCR MSCP Steering Committee Meeting October 25, 2017  
McCarran Airport, Meeting Rooms 2&3

Attending

Perri Benemelis	Vikki Bradshaw	Jeremy Brooks	Scott Bryan
Gil Cristobal	Leslie Goudie	Michael Hulin	Vineetha Kartha
Jimmy Knowles	Bill Lamb	Jessica Neuwerth	Wade Noble
Colby Pellegrino	Sara Price	Carrie Ronning	Laura Simonek
Jon Sjoberg	Jim Stolberg	John Swett	Laura Vecerina
Marc Wicke	Scott Weidermann		

Attending Via Conference Call

Bert Bell	Linda Carbone	Jess Gwinn	Chris Hayes
Ned Hyduke	Megan Scott	Stevie Sharp	Branden Singer
Linda Sullivan	Kimberlyn Vasquez	Dave Vigil	

**1. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS**

Introductions

The meeting was convened at 9:30 a.m. by John Swett. There were self-introductions of all attending. Perri Benemelis chaired the meeting.

Review of Agenda

The agenda was reviewed and approved.

Public Comments

No public comments were offered.

Approve June 28, 2017 Meeting Notes

The June 28, 2017 meeting notes were approved. (Moved by Wade Noble, seconded by Jon Sjoberg and adopted by consensus.)

**2. WORK PLAN AND BUDGET**

Before starting his briefing, John Swett introduced Jim Stolberg as the new Fisheries Group manager. He also thanked Leslie Goudie from Hoover Dam for her detail in administrative support to the LCR MSCP.

John noted that the Final Implementation Report, Fiscal Year 2018 Work Plan and Budget, Fiscal Year 2016 Accomplishment Report had been approved by Steering Committee on the June 28, 2017 conference call. Reclamation received the concurrence letter from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on July 14, 2017, which is included in the meeting materials. He thanked Jess Gwinn for the quick turn around on the letter.

John noted that the required funding for the program in FY18 is \$31,251,240. This consists of \$15,625,620 in non-federal funds, with \$4,648,738.28 from the Arizona parties, \$3,535,238.36 from the Nevada parties, and \$7,441,643.36 from the California parties. He noted that Arizona is still providing additional payments to make up for reduced funding in the early years of the program, and the San Diego County Water Authority is still using their credits for their yearly contributions. The approved program funding of \$33,496,740 for FY18 is slightly above the required amount. No funding will be contributed to the Land and Water Fund this year. John noted that the new Schedule D Hoover Power Contractors will start making their LCR MSCP payments. These payments are shown on the LCR MSCP Fiscal Year 2018 Funding Schedule. Reclamation will be billing the Tribal Schedule D Contractors separately. Most of the tribal 1<sup>st</sup> quarter payments have been received. John noted that the federal government is on a continuing resolution until December 8, 2017.

### **3. PROCESS UPDATES**

John noted that on the June 28, 2017 conference call, the Steering Committee approved the Steering Committee Chair sending the application and supporting documents to add the northern Mexican gartersnake as a covered species to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) for processing. Jess Gwinn has been working with the USFWS's Southwestern Regional Office to process the amendment. The documents are now in Washington D.C. being reviewed by the solicitor. After the review, a notice will be published in the federal register, with a 30-day comment period. John would like to see the process completed so that projects such as construction at Planet Ranch and a Reclamation Yuma Area Office dredging project can proceed. John noted that after approval of the amendment, both the IA and FMA will need to be amended to include the northern Mexican gartersnake.

### **4. PROGRAM UPDATES**

**Water Outage Lake Mead Fish Hatchery:** Jim Stolberg provided an overview of how the Lake Mead Fish Hatchery contributes to fish augmentation and research and system monitoring projects. He provided an update on the fish loss due to a power outage at the hatchery. On August 24, 2017 the Basic Water Company facility at Lake Mead was struck by lightning, which prevented water delivery to the hatchery for approximately 14 hours. Lake Mead hatchery staff implemented their protocol for planned water outages as soon as the outage was noticed. Despite the efforts of hatchery staff, 3,500 bonytail and 4,350 razorback were lost. The duration of the water outage was the key factor. Jim noted that the loss of these fish will have little impact on the FY18-20 augmentation as Reclamation transported 2,000 bonytail to the hatchery to offset the

loss. Reclamation is working with the hatchery to review the planned water outage protocol, improve communication with Basic Water Company, evaluate ways to alert staff more promptly of a water outage, explore options for additional on-site water storage, and establish an emergency protocol.

### **Planet Ranch:**

The draft Environmental Assessment for the Planet Ranch Conservation Area is being reviewed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). It will then be available to the public for a 30-day comment period. There will be a public information meeting at Lake Havasu City the 2<sup>nd</sup> week in December. The format of the meeting will be open house style, with the LCR MSCP, Arizona Game and Fish Department, BLM, and the USFWS having displays set up. The public meeting is being scheduled in December so that part-time residents from out of town can attend. Reclamation is drafting a Restoration Development and Monitoring plan and a Land Use Agreement with AGFD. Drafts will be sent to AGFD for their review before the start of construction. John noted that it is important to have the northern Mexican gartersnake added as a covered species to the program so that a separate Endangered Species Act consultation would not be required. Reclamation will be completing the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of farming at Planet Ranch in December 2017. We will then have 4 years to complete the construction at Planet Ranch in order to start using the water rights within the required 5 year time period.

## **5. STEERING COMMITTEE SCHEDULE**

The next Steering Committee meeting is scheduled for April 25, 2018. Also included in the meeting materials is an updated voting list.

## **6. SUMMARY AND ACTION ITEMS**

The Steering Committee took action on one item.

## **7. ADJOURN**

The meeting adjourned at 10:53 a.m.